



Interstate 90: Interstate 190 to Harlem Avenue
Phase I Study
P-91-128-12
PTB 162/001

Project Working Group (PWG) Meeting #1

The first Project Working Group (PWG) meeting for the I-90 Phase I Study was held on Monday, April 29, 2013 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The meeting was held at the Chicago Public Library Roden Branch (6083 N. Northwest Highway) which is nearby the project area.

The meeting was conducted as part of IDOT's Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) process. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the role of the PWG and gather input and agreement on the following points in the project process:

- Issues and Concerns
- Goals and Objectives
- Problem Statement

Invitations were sent to community leaders, elected officials, representatives of public agencies and all stakeholders who attended the first Public Meeting. In addition, stakeholders who were not able to make the public meeting but requested to participate in PWG meetings were also invited. The invitations were sent via email or by regular mail if an email address was not available for a stakeholder.

Ten stakeholders attended the meeting:

- 41st Ward Alderman and Chief of Staff
- Village of Norridge Engineer
- Representatives of CDOT, CTA, Pace, Illinois Tollway
- 3 Resident Stakeholders

The first portion of the meeting included introductions of meeting attendees and IDOT and consultant staff. Consultant staff then gave a PowerPoint presentation to review background information about the study, presented ground rules for PWG participation, recapped the Public Meeting held on March 26, 2013, explained the steps in the project development process, and outlined the purpose of the first PWG meeting.

Next, three workshops were held to facilitate an open discussion on the following topics: issues and concerns, goals and objectives, and Problem Statement. For each of these project topics, the project team asked stakeholders for their thoughts on these subjects which were then recorded on a flip chart. Valuable input was provided by the stakeholders and interactive dialogue occurred between all attendees. Then the project team presented their preliminary list for each topic that had been previously developed based on input received from project initiation meetings and the Public Meeting. As a result of stakeholder input at the PWG meeting, several additions and modifications were made to the preliminary lists.

The first workshop focused on issues and concerns for the project. Following the general outline above, first the stakeholders discussed their thoughts on project issues and concerns. Additional issues and concerns were added to the preliminary list based on this discussion, including construction impacts, environmental impacts, and community impacts. Concern about noise impacts was included in the preliminary list, but since there are other types of environmental concerns as well, it will now be included as a subset of environmental impacts. Lastly, the issue of “coordination with adjacent improvements” was modified to “coordinate with transportation network” since coordination must occur with both existing and proposed facilities.

Preliminary Issues and Concerns:

- Safety
- Traffic operations
 - Congestion
 - Capacity
 - Weaving/merging/diverging
- Multi-modal coordination
- ~~Noise impacts~~ (Included in new category: Environmental impacts)
- Coordination with ~~adjacent improvements~~ transportation network

Added as a result of stakeholder input:

- Construction impacts
- Environmental impacts
- Community impacts

Table 1 shows each comment that was recorded during the issues and concerns discussion. The comments were grouped into seven categories, which are the issues and concerns listed above. The second column of **Table 1** shows how each comment fits into the seven categories.

Table 1	
Stakeholder Issues & Concerns	Category
Potential for R.O.W. acquisition at Bryn Mawr Avenue	Community impacts
Safety and operations at I-90/I-190 to Cumberland	Safety Traffic operations
Air quality concerns	Environmental impacts
Noise impacts	Environmental impacts
Potential for project to increase traffic speeds which could impact noise levels	Environmental impacts
Type and placement of potential noise walls	Environmental impacts
Potential to use landscaping for noise abatement	Environmental impacts
Construction causing damage to surface streets	Construction impacts
Construction staging	Construction impacts
Delays during construction	Construction impacts
Bus re-routes during construction	Construction impacts
Concern that project could cause increased use of surface streets to enter the expressway where the auxiliary lane starts	Community impacts Coordination with transportation network
Concern for resident safety due to possible increased speeds on surface streets	Community impacts Coordination with transportation network
Ramp access at Harlem	Traffic operations Coordination with transportation network
Location of the start of the additional lane	Traffic operations
Operations for traffic going to airport	Traffic operations
Better signage is needed going westbound to delineate I-90 versus I-190 (airport)	Traffic operations
Drainage impacts	Environmental impacts
Defining limits of the scope	All
Better signage is needed eastbound and westbound	Traffic operations
Pedestrian access if any modifications are made on ramps	Community impacts Multi-modal coordination
Ability to accommodate future BRT lanes	Coordination with transportation network Multi-modal coordination
Potential for managed lanes in future	Coordination with transportation network
Local job opportunities and employment	Community impacts
Impacts to CTA stations	Community impacts Multi-modal coordination
Local street impacts	Community impacts Coordination with transportation network

The next workshop focused on project goals and objectives. The preliminary list of goals and objectives was as follows:

- Improve safety
- Reduce congestion and improve traffic flow
- Minimize negative environmental effects

Added as a result of stakeholder input:

- Minimize negative community effects

Table 2 lists the comments recorded from the discussion with stakeholders as well as how they fit into the goals and objectives above.

Table 2	
Stakeholder Goals and Objectives	Category
Operations and traffic flow through toll plaza	Reduce congestion and improve traffic flow
Increased safety, both on I-90 and local streets	Improve safety Minimize negative community effects
Improved operations and driver behavior	Reduce congestion and improve traffic flow
Minimize impacts at project limits	Minimize negative environmental effects Minimize negative community effects

The third workshop was regarding the project Problem Statement. With the discussions about issues, concerns, goals and objectives in mind, the stakeholders were asked to review a preliminary draft of the Problem Statement. The draft statement was as follows:

Interstate 90 (I-90) is an important transportation corridor in the Chicago region. The portion of the corridor between I-190 and Harlem Avenue (IL 43) serves as a transition area between the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway and the Kennedy Expressway. This section of I-90 experiences major traffic congestion. Safety is also a concern due to the high crash rates in some areas. These issues make it difficult to move people and goods through the study area.

Stakeholders had the following comments about the Problem Statement:

- Project must be cognizant of locals in the study area, not just moving people and goods through the study area
- Noise is also an existing concern in addition to congestion

As a result of this input, the Problem Statement was revised as follows (bold text indicates addition):

*Interstate 90 (I-90) is an important transportation corridor in the Chicago region. The portion of the corridor between I-190 and Harlem Avenue (IL 43) serves as a transition area between the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway and the Kennedy Expressway. This section of I-90 experiences major traffic congestion, **and contributes to environmental concerns for the surrounding***

communities such as traffic noise, air quality and drainage issues. Safety is also a concern due to the high crash rates in some areas. These issues make it difficult for local and regional traffic to move within and through the study area.

It was clarified during the open discussion that environmental impacts such as noise and air quality must be evaluated for any Proposed Improvement in order to be compliant with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). For the purposes of developing a project Problem Statement, the reference to environmental impacts can be included to underscore the emphasis of the perceived problem as discussed by stakeholders at the Project Working Group. However, reference to environmental impacts may not be included on the project Purpose and Need Statement, since the project Purpose and Need Statement must emphasize the underlying transportation needs that drive the project in order to qualify the project for further development (which includes environmental analysis).

The next step of the project is to develop the Purpose and Need. The project team will develop the Purpose and Need based on the input received at the first PWG meeting on the issues, concerns, goals, objectives and Problem Statement. This will be emailed to all PWG attendees for review and comment. Once the Purpose and Need is finalized, development of alternatives will begin.